

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1-26 (canceled)

Claim 27 (previously presented): A system of interconnecting a plurality of virtual private networks, the system comprising:

 a plurality of virtual private networks, each of the virtual private networks having multiple service providers;

 at least one interconnect provider configured to connect the plurality of virtual private networks; and

 a global overseer configured to ensure end-to-end service quality across multiple ones of the plurality of virtual private networks.

Claim 28 (previously presented): The system of claim 27, wherein end-to-end service quality across multiple ones of the plurality of virtual private networks includes maintaining minimum standards for cross network services, virtual private network interoperability, inter-network performance, inter-network reliability, disaster recovery and business continuity, inter-network security, inter-network customer care, and inter-network trouble handling across multiple ones of the plurality of virtual private networks.

Claim 29 (previously presented): The system of claim 28, wherein end-to-end service quality across multiple ones of the plurality of virtual private networks includes maintaining the minimum standards from a first subscriber of one of the plurality of virtual private networks to a second subscriber of another of the plurality of virtual private networks.

Claim 30 (previously presented): The system of claim 27, wherein end-to-end service quality across multiple ones of the plurality of virtual private networks includes maintaining packet latency below a maximum acceptable value between a first subscriber of one of the plurality of

virtual private networks to a second subscriber of another of the plurality of virtual private networks.

Claim 31 (previously presented): The system of claim 27, wherein end-to-end service quality across multiple ones of the plurality of virtual private networks includes maintaining the number of multiple service providers below a maximum acceptable number between a first subscriber of one of the plurality of virtual private networks to a second subscriber of another of the plurality of virtual private networks.

Claim 32 (previously presented): The system of claim 27, wherein end-to-end service quality across multiple ones of the plurality of virtual private networks includes maintaining an operable connection within a maximum acceptable period of unavailability between a first subscriber of one of the plurality of virtual private networks to a second subscriber of another of the plurality of virtual private networks.

Claim 33 (previously presented): The system of claim 27, wherein each of the plurality of virtual private networks comprises a program overseer configured to ensure end-to-end service quality across its corresponding virtual private network.

Claim 34 (previously presented): The system of claim 33, wherein the global overseer is configured to resolve disputes between ones of the program overseers.

Claim 35 (previously presented): The system of claim 33, wherein the global overseer is configured to resolve disputes between one of the program overseers and the at least one interconnect provider.

Claim 36 (previously presented): The system of claim 33, wherein each of the program overseers is configured to resolve disputes between the multiple service providers within its corresponding virtual private network.

Claim 37 (previously presented): The system of claim 33, wherein each of the program overseers pays a fee to the global overseer for maintaining the global overseer and the at least one interconnect provider pays a fee to the global overseer for certification.

Claim 38 (currently amended): The system of claim 27, wherein the at least one interconnect provider includes at least two interconnect providers, wherein the at least two of the interconnect providers service at least one different virtual private network of the plurality of virtual private networks.

Claim 39 (previously presented): The system of claim 27, wherein end-to-end service quality includes a quantified end-to-end service quality level.

Claim 40 (previously presented): The system of claim 39, wherein the quantified end-to-end service quality is a parameter of operation of one of the plurality of virtual private networks.

Claim 41 (previously presented): A method of interconnecting at least one interconnect provider between a plurality of virtual private networks to ensure end-to-end service quality across multiple ones of the plurality of virtual private networks, each of the virtual private networks having multiple subscribers, multiple service providers, and at least one exchange point interconnecting the plurality of multiple service providers, the method comprising steps of:

providing at least one interconnect provider disposed between a first set of the multiple service providers in one of the plurality of virtual private networks and a second set of the multiple service providers in a second one of the plurality of virtual private networks; and

providing a global overseer coupled to the at least one interconnect provider, wherein the global overseer is configured to ensure end-to-end service quality across multiple ones of the plurality of virtual private networks.

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Claim 42 (previously presented): The method of claim 41, wherein the at least one interconnect provider is also one of the multiple service providers within at least one of the plurality of virtual private networks.

Claim 43 (previously presented): The method of claim 41, further comprising a step of certifying the at least one interconnect provider by the global overseer.

Claim 44 (previously presented): The method of claim 41, further comprising a step of providing at least one exchange point between the first set of the multiple service providers and the at least one interconnect provider.

Claim 45 (previously presented): The method of claim 44, further comprising a step of providing at least one second exchange point between the second set of the multiple service providers and the at least one interconnect provider.

Claim 46 (previously presented): The method of claim 41, wherein a maximum number of the multiple service providers between two of the multiple subscribers is two and the maximum number of the multiple service providers and the at least one interconnect provider between subscribers of different ones of the plurality of virtual private networks is three.